

# Planning and preparing for school now, easier later

BY HEATHER JOHNSON  
DUROCHER

Special to the Record-Eagle

Shopping normally isn't high on Luke Ferris' list of favorite things to do, but the 11-year-old admits his attitude changes as a new school year nears.

"It always feels good to shop for school stuff," said Ferris, who starts 6th grade at Bertha Vos Elementary School this fall. "It makes me get excited."

Stopping by his school not long before the first day back — to check out his classroom and meet his teacher — also pumps him up for the return to early mornings and homework.

From shopping for clothes and school supplies to going to bed earlier and eating better, such activities in the

weeks prior to school starting help families successfully ease out of those long summer days and into the more scheduled fall routine. The more prepared students are for school, the stronger their ability is to learn.

"Just as adults have a responsibility to perform well at their job, kids have a 'job' to do at school, and it's important to help them develop a positive attitude about this from the start," said Rich Martin, a Munson Healthcare physician who works at Kids Creek Children's Clinic in Traverse City.

How best to adjust to another school year?

Here are tips gathered from parents and teachers.

■ Encourage book reading the whole summer through,

suggested Annette Ferris, Luke's mom. This may mean participating in the local library's summer reading program or reading as a family at home.

■ Shop for clothing, a backpack and supplies.

"A favorite outfit or shirt may help boost first day morale and comfort," said Martin, who feels strongly that a healthy child means she is healthy not only physically, but mentally and emotionally as well.

"Do whatever you can to get your kids excited about school," agreed Jennifer Hart, from West Junior High School, who enjoys helping her 12-year-old nephew prepare for another school year by choosing fun learning workbooks from Creative Classrooms in Traverse City.

■ Encourage going to bed at a reasonable time and waking up earlier at least two weeks before school starts. Also, push breakfast and healthy snacking.

"Certainly the sleeping and nutrition is the most important," said Hart, who teaches seventh grade language arts as well as oversees the eighth and ninth grade yearbook class.

"When kids come to school sleep-deprived or hungry, we see a lot of behavior problems."

■ Have your children touch base with friends they maybe haven't seen during the summer and stop by their school to check out their classroom. This especially is important for junior high and high school students, who may need to

know about locker combinations and class schedules. Couldn't attend an organized orientation? Call the school and schedule a time to come in, Hart said.

■ Do a health check, said Martin. "Make sure all medications, their dosages, and adverse reactions are noted by the school office or nursing staff," he said.

Bee sting and peanut allergies, he adds, are common, and reactions may occur at school unexpectedly.

Another reminder: "Relay any concerns about issues over the summer, or those noted in the child's last physical exam to the appropriate person at school."

If you have concerns about your child's vision or atten-

tion span, consider requesting your child sit near the front of the class.

■ Talk about safely arriving at school, whether it's by walking, biking, driving or riding the bus. Get familiar with the safest route before school starts. Include a buddy system, and reinforce the importance of seat belts and helmets as essentials for safe travel.

One last thing: tell your children to enjoy those final summer days before the school bell rings, said Martin.

After all, he reminded, "You'll be best able to do well in school when your body and mind are refreshed."

**Heather Johnson Durocher is a local freelance writer.**

# Stock students with the right supplies for success in school

BY MARK EDWARD NERO  
Copley News Service

Just like how carpenters, surgeons and other professionals in the working world need the right tools in order to perform their jobs properly, young students need the right supplies to succeed in school.

Students without the right supplies — or the proper amount of them — are at risk of falling behind in their class work and having to eventually work harder to catch up with their classmates.

The types of supplies students require obviously vary, depending on a child's grade. But there are some basic supplies that most students need, no matter what level they're at.

Staples, the nationwide home and office supply store, recommends that fundamental student supplies include a backpack, No. 2 pencils, pink wedge erasers and a notebook with paper. For first graders, the other essential supplies are simple: arts-and-crafts supplies (like glue sticks), blunt scissors, crayons, ruler and tissue.

Your average sixth grader usually doesn't need the art supplies listed above, but does need a basic calculator, a box of fine-tip markers, yellow high-lighters, pens with black and blue ink, Post-It notes and a multisubject spiral notebook, according to numerous teachers' associations and education specialists. Seventh and eighth graders, though, should

have a scientific calculator, instead of a basic one, and a box of fine-tip markers,

could need computer disks for computer classes, or special supplies like con-

tain classes. The purchase of supplies by parents for children has

become more and more important in recent years, with many school districts being forced to cut back on the amount of supplies they purchase due to budget cuts. Now, in addition to buying things for their children, many parents are

known to purchase supplies that can be used by an entire class, like three-hole punches, wall-mounted pencil sharpeners, computer paper and printer toner cartridges.



CNS Photo courtesy of Franklin Covey

A daily planner, like this one from Franklin Covey for ages 6 to 12, can help students stay organized and learn time-management skills that will benefit them their entire lives.

plus a folder and/or binder with tabbed dividers.

High school freshmen, in addition to most of the supplies middle schoolers need, should have a dictionary and thesaurus (for English class), plus red pens, a ring binder and graph paper. Students in the 10th through 12th grades will want to have most of the above, plus folders.

Some serious-minded students also prefer to utilize other supplies like paper clips, ruler, a small pencil sharpener, White Out, colored pencils and tape.

The above list isn't all-inclusive. Some needed supplies can depend on what courses your students are taking. For example, if they're taking typing, then obviously, they'll need typing paper. Likewise, they

struction paper if taking art classes. Drug stores and 99-cent stores are good places to find cheap notebooks, clear tape and various other small supplies.

So how is a student supposed to get all these supplies to class on a daily basis? A backpack or book bag is the easiest way, but students should be careful to keep the pack or bag organized and cleaned out, plus make a habit of organizing it regularly. Though parents may have to go to more than one store when searching for supplies for their students, some major retailers are essentially one-stop shops for their needs. Staples, Office Depot and Wal-Mart all carry a wide selection of goods, and most arts-and-crafts stores will have specialty items needed for cer-

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